

THE CORRESPONDENT.

MAGNA EST VERITAS ET PREVALEBIT.

BY GEORGE HOUSTON, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

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CORRESPONDENCE.

An examination of Dugald Stewart's essay on man's constitutional knowledge of deity; in a letter to a friend.

Concluded from page 51.

A little farther on I perceive Mr. Stewart, through conviction of error, with a candid and upright mind, acknowledges the fallacy and inapplicability of his former arguments, viz., that man's curiosity about the material world, does not evince his immortality; for says he, "the same measure of curiosity and of genius which was necessary for the purposes of life, could not fail to bring also to light a variety of truths which do not admit of practical application." "But," says he, "what shall we say of our curiosity concerning the author of Nature, and the satisfaction we derive in contemplating the works of power, wisdom, and goodness, which are impressed on his works? To what purpose are we rendered capable of elevating our thoughts to him, if we are never to enjoy a clearer view of his nature and attributes, and of the manner in which he governs the material and the moral world?"

The same answer which he himself has applied to his former arguments, may be justly and satisfactorily applied to the case before us; viz. "that the same measure of curiosity and of genius which was necessary for the purposes of life, could not fail to bring also to light a variety of truths which do not admit of a practical application;" or, in other words, could not fail of engaging the curiosity to researches, or to the construction of theories, where facts, or visual testimony could not be obtained by investigation; as in the abstruse branches of metaphysics.—The only means through which we can become acquainted with the deity, are his works which are presented to us; we can not go to suppositions or probabilities, to establish our belief in his existence; and so far as we are acquainted with the material world, we find it governed by laws coeval with its existence, never deviating from a steady and uniform course; or to use a trite, but no less true than trite an expression, "like causes always produce like effects;" and not dependant upon a superior power for its existence and government. How singular it is that theists, while they declare spiritualities to be superior to earthly objects, base all their arguments of their existence upon deductions drawn from earthly and physical sounds. But to return; why does man explore the ab-

struse and undefinable paths of metaphysics ; is it because he is destined to enjoy the fanciful dreams or theories which he has created in his own mind ? Because man is capable of forming theories, does it prove that he is to realize and enjoy them ?

Let me see if you will not agree with me in the causes which I shall assign for man's tendency to ascribe to some superior omniscient being, the happy composition and government of the physical world. The primitive causes of paying tribute to a higher power, I conceive to have been these. Man is born in ignorance of every object around him ; he is endowed by nature with superstition, the attendant of ignorance ; and growing to maturity with these evils implanted in his existence, and with the evils arising from, and incident to them, he looked abroad upon the vast and magnificent field of curiosities every where presented to him, without the ability of accounting for them : he supposed the phenomena of nature, were so many omens or predictions of "coming events casting their shadows before," from some superior and godlike power ; and for the purpose of averting his wrath, and gaining his good will, altars were raised to him—sacrifices offered—and his protection invoked by prayers and every other means which human art could invent. Over every element—over every passion—and over every purpose of life and death, were certain deities supposed to preside, to govern ; and were invoked whenever circumstances rendered their assistance necessary. Tutelary deities were supposed to preside over the interests of nations, cities, and individuals ; and altars were raised to them, and resorted to when their interests were jeopardized by the encroachments of a hostile foe.

These I consider to have been the first causes of apotheosis, or reverence to superior beings ; and the reasons which urge man at the present enlightened age to its continuation, are the same, but modified by circumstances. Man is still born ignorant of the thousands of operating causes in nature, and their incident effects ; and of the thousands of effects and their natural causes : but by consecutive ages of unsuccessful investigation of the secrets of nature, he is now enabled to ascribe to their proper causes, many of the curious and grand phenomena, which she presents, and which were formerly considered as miraculous omens, or some deviation from nature, which had no other cause than the factitious will of their deities. But man is still under the influence of two obstacles, very pernicious to liberal and extended views. First, prejudice for old established opinions ; which are inculcated on the early and credulous mind ; and "growing with its growth, and strengthening with its strength," destroys almost every incitement to free thinking. Secondly, the ignorance with which he still labors under with regard to the grand governing principles of nature's greatest works. His ignorance of their causes, (as in matters of less note in days of yore) leads him to attribute them to the control of a deity. The objects which lead to this reverence, are either so far distant from his sphere of investigation, as not to allow of a careful and correct examination ; or are of so subtle and abstruse a nature, as not to be brought to bear upon, or be susceptible to, the faculties of investigation which he possesses ; and they will probably, for these reasons, be forever hid from the knowledge of the human mind. Thus, I think, I have ascribed reasons for the superstition of mankind.

liable to fewer objections than those assigned by Mr. Stewart. I will now proceed in the examination of the essay.

The next position which our author has taken, is this, "our constitution determines us to believe that every event requires an efficient cause, and implies the operation of power; and this gives us our ideas of deity." This is the very argument which I have applied for the superstitious reverence by man of God. It is man's signorance in first causes that leads him to ascribe them to deity; for wherever man has become acquainted with the causes of events, he has always found them to be independent of a ruling deity. For instance, man by investigation has become acquainted with the causes which produce winds; but before possessing this knowledge, he ascribed them to deities, who controled and regulated them, and which deities had temples and altars raised to their worship, to procure their protection. Exactly the same are the reasons for ascribing the unknown causes of events, at the present day, to an imaginary power.

"If man," continues our author, "had no intimation of a future existence, it would have been better for him never to have extended his views beyond this globe;" or at least, not beyond the material world, he should have added, and then I would have fully concurred; because this belief of a deity and of a future state, has been the greatest detriment in the world to the advancement of civilization, and of useful and practical knowledge.

CATO.

LECTURES ON KNOWLEDGE.

By FRANCES WRIGHT.

LECTURE II.

OF FREE ENQUIRY CONSIDERED AS A MEAN FOR OBTAINING JUST KNOWLEDGE.

The subject we have to examine this evening is that of free enquiry considered as a mean for the attainment of just knowledge.

At our last meeting we endeavored to investigate the nature and object of just knowledge, together with the means proper for its attainment. We discovered these means to be two; a judicious education and a free spirit of enquiry.

From the first and best means, a judicious education, we of the present generation are, unfortunately, excluded. Wherever our lot may have been cast, or whatever may be our attainments, we must all be conscious, that we are what we are in spite of many disadvantages; and that, however wise or good our vanity may pronounce us to be, we should have been much wiser, and consequently, better and happier, had a judicious education more carefully developed our tender faculties, and brought order and accuracy to all our nascent ideas. But the forest is grown, and, straight or crooked, the trees have to stand pretty much as early circumstances have inclined them. Still, something may be done; nay! if we bring fearless and determined spirits to the work, much may be done—much for ourselves and every thing for our descendants. It rests with us to command, for the rising generation, that education the want of which we, in our own case, deplore. It rests with us to open, with a golden key, the gates of just knowledge for our children; and to marshal them in those smooth, broad, pleasant paths, which we ourselves

have never trod. Equally true it is, that we cannot, for ourselves, command that first, best means for attaining the first, best good. Our opinions have unfortunately to be changed, not simply formed; our advance in knowledge must involve forgetting as well as acquiring. We have not in our own minds, to till a virgin soil, but one surcharged with weeds, rank, entangled and poisonous. Still it is ours to redeem the soil. We may set the edge of our ploughshares, apply them with a steady and nervous hand, and scatter the good seed in time to reap a harvest.

The second means for the attainment of knowledge is ours, if we choose to exercise it; that is, if we feel the importance of the object and have courage to employ the means. The importance of the object we *must* feel, if we feel at all, for ourselves or for our race; if we are not wholly indifferent to the rank we hold in the scale of being: not wholly indifferent to our moral excellence, to our mental elevation; to our own peace, to our own utility, to the liberty and happiness of our species through all the ages of time to come. And if such be the mighty consequences depending on the object, shall we lack the courage to employ the means? And what means? to open our eyes and our ears; to throw wide the gates of our understanding; to dare the exercise of our intellectual faculties, and to encourage in others, as in ourselves, a habit of accurate and dispassionate investigation.

We have seen also that it is not our own improvement merely that must be advanced or impeded according to our courage or timidity, but that of future generations, whose destiny it is ours to influence. Strongly, then, are we pledged to lay aside indolence and fear: and to engage honestly in the task of weeding out our prejudices and establishing our opinions.

There is a common error that I feel myself called upon to notice; nor know I the country in which it is more prevalent than in this. Whatever indifference may generally prevail among men, still there are many eager for the acquisition of knowledge; willing to enquire, and anxious to base their opinions upon correct principles. In the curiosity which motives their exertions, however, the vital principle is but too often wanting. They come selfishly, and not generously to the tree of knowledge. They eat, but care not to impart of the fruit to others. Nay, there are who, having leaped the briar fence of prejudice themselves, will heap new thorns in the way of those who would venture the same.

And have the Americans yet to learn that the interests of all are compounded of the interests of each? and that he who, in pursuing his own advantage, immolates one interest of his fellow beings, fails in justice as a man, commits treason as a citizen? And oh! what interest so dear as that of mental improvement? Who is without that interest? or of whom is not that interest sacred? Man, woman, child—who has not a claim to the exercise of his reason? or what justice may compare with that which says to me, "thought is good for thee," and to another "knowledge is to thee forbidden."

But will this imputation startle my hearers? Will they say, America is the home of liberty, and Americans brethren in equality, Is it so? and may we not ask here as elsewhere, how many are there, not anxious

to monopolize, but to universalize knowledge? how many, who consider their own improvement in relation always with that of their fellow-beings, and who feel the imparting of truth to be not a work of supererogation, but a duty; the withholding it, not a venial omission but a treachery to the race. Which of us have not seen fathers of families pursuing investigations themselves which they hide from their sons, and more especially from their wives and daughters? As if truth could be of less importance to the young than to the old; or as if the sex which in all ages has ruled the destinies of the world could be less worth enlightening than that which only follows its lead!

The observation I have hazarded may require some explanation. Those who arrogate power usually think themselves superior *de facto* and *de jure*. Yet justly might it be made a question whether those who ostensibly govern are not always unconsciously led. Should we examine closely into the state of things, we might find that in all countries slaves decide the destinies of their masters, more than masters those of the slave. Even as the laboring classes influence more directly the fortunes of a nation than does the civil officer, the aspiring statesman, the rich capitalist or the speculative philosopher. However novel it may appear, I shall venture the assertion that until women assume the place in society which good sense and good feeling alike assign to them, human improvement must advance but feebly. It is in vain that we should circumscribe the power of one half of our race, and that half by far the most important and influential. If they exert it not for good, they will for evil; if they advance not knowledge, they will perpetuate ignorance. Let women stand where they may in the scale of improvement, their position decides that of the race. Are they cultivated?—so is society polished and enlightened. Are they ignorant?—so is it gross and insipid. Are they wise?—so is the human condition prosperous. Are they foolish?—so is it unstable and unpromising. Are they free?—so is the human character elevated. Are they enslaved?—so is the whole race degraded. Oh! that we could learn the advantage of just practice and consistent principles! that we could understand, that every departure from principle, how speciously soever it may appear to administer to our selfish interests, invariably saps their very foundation! that we could learn that what is ruinous to some is injurious to all! and that whenever we establish our own pretensions upon the sacrificed rights of others, we do in fact impeach our own liberties and lower ourselves in the scale of being.

But to return. It is my object to show, that before we engage successfully in the work of enquiry we must engage in a body, we must engage collectively; as human beings desirous of attaining the highest excellence of which our nature is capable; as children of one family anxious to discover the true and the useful for the common advantage of all. It is my farther object to show that no farther co-operation in this matter can be effective which does not embrace the two sexes on a footing of equality; and, again, that no co-operation in this matter can be effective, which does not embrace human beings on a foot of equality. Is this a republic—a country whose affairs are governed by the public voice—while the public mind is equally unenlightened? Is this a republic—

where the interests of the many keeps in check those of the few—while the few holds possession of the court of knowledge, and the many stand as suitors at the door? Is this a republic, where the rights of all are respected, the interest of all are equally secured, the ambition of all equally regulated, the services of all equally rendered? Is this such a republic—while we see endowed colleges for the rich and barely grammar schools for the poor; while but one drop of colored blood shall stamp a fellow-creature for a slave, or, at the least, degrade him below sympathy; and while one half of the whole population is left in civil bondage, and, as it were, sentenced to mental imbecility?

Let us pause to enquire if this be consistent with the being of a republic. Without knowledge, could your fathers have conquered liberty? and without knowledge, can you retain it? Equality! where is it, if not in education? Equal rights! they cannot exist without equality of instruction. "All men are born free and equal!" they may be so *born*, but do they so *live*? Are they educated as equals? and, if not, can they be equal? and if not equal, can they be free? Do not the rich command instruction? and they who have instruction, must they not possess the power? and when they have the power, will they not exert it in their own favor? I will ask, if two professions do not now rule the land and its inhabitants? I will ask, whether your legislatures are not governed by lawyers, and your households by priests? Are not these matters of popular interest? matters for popular enquiry? We shall examine to-morrow whether we have all the means necessary for equalizing instruction, not merely among your children but yourselves; so far, at least, as to place your liberties beyond risk of attainder. This examination will involve all your interests, national and social. Your political institutions have taken equality for their basis; your declaration of rights, upon which your institutions rest, sets forth this principle as vital and inviolate. Equality is the soul of liberty; there is in fact no liberty without it—none that cannot be overthrown by the violence of ignorant anarchy; or sapped by the subtlety of professional craft. That this is the case your reason will admit; that this is the case, your feelings do admit—even those which are the least amiable and the least praiseworthy. The vulgar jealousy betrayed by the uncultivated against those of more polished address and manners has its source in the beneficial principle to which we advert; however, in this as in many other cases, misconceived and perverted. Cultivation of mind will ever lighten the countenance and polish the exterior. This external superiority, which is but a faint emanation of the superiority within, vulgar eyes can see and ignorant jealousy will resent. This, in a republic, leads to brutality; and, in aristocracies where this jealousy is restrained by fear, to servility. Here it will lead the wagoner to dispute the road with a carriage; and in Europe, will make the foot-passenger doff his hat to the lordly equipage which spatters him with mud, while he mutters curses only in his heart. The unreasoning observer will refer the conduct of the first to the *republican institutions*—the reflecting observer, to the *anti-republican education*. The instruction befitting free men is that which gives the sun of knowledge to shine on all: and which at once secures the liberties of each individual, and disposes each individual to make a proper use of them.

Equality, then, we have shown to have its seat in the mind. A proper cultivation of the faculties would ensure a sufficiency of that equality for all the ends of republican government, and for all the modes of special enjoyment. The diversity in the natural powers of different minds, as decided by physical organization, would then be only a source of interest and agreeable variety. All would be capable of appreciating the peculiar powers of each; and each would perceive that his interest, well understood, were in unison with the interests of all. Let us now examine whether liberty, properly interpreted, does not involve, among unalienable rights as citizens and human beings, the right of equal means of instruction.

Have ye given a pledge, sealed with the blood of your fathers, for the equal rights of all mankind, sheltered within your confines? What means the pledge? and what understand ye by human rights? But understand them as ye will, define them as ye will, how are men to be secured in the *equal exercise* of those rights without *equality of instruction*? By instruction, understand me to mean, knowledge—*just knowledge*; not talent, not genius, not inventive mental powers. These vary in every human being; but knowledge is the same for every mind, and every mind may and ought to be trained to receive it. If then, ye have pledged, at each anniversary of your political independence, your lives, properties and honor, to the securing your common liberties, ye have pledged your lives, properties and honor to the securing *your common instruction*. Or will ye secure the end without securing the means? ye shall do it, when ye reap the harvest without planting the seed.

Oh! were the principle of human liberty understood, how clear would be the principle of human conduct! It would light us unerringly to our duty as citizens. It would light us unerringly to our duties as men. It would lead us aright in every action of our lives, regulate justly every feeling and affection of our hearts, and be to us a rule more unerring than laws, more binding than oaths, more enforcing than penalties. Then would passion yield to reason, selfishness to justice; and the equal rights of others be the sole, but the sure, immutable, limit of our own.

To be continued.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 1829.

Celebration of Mr. Paine's Birth-Day at New-Hartford, Oneida County, New-York

Utica, January 30th, 1829.

Mr. Geo. Houston; Dear sir—I have the pleasure of informing you, that the friends of liberal principles celebrated the birth day of THOMAS PAINE, last evening, at New-Hartford. The company, convened from different parts of the county, was large and respectable; and I do not recollect of ever being at a meeting where so much unalloyed satisfaction and good feeling prevailed as on this occasion. Mr. Thomas Emerson, of Augusta, was chosen president; Mr. James Groves, of New-Hartford, vice president; and Mr. Andrew Kirwan, of Deerfield, secretary. After supper, which was excellent, Mr. James McElroy, of New Hartford, delivered the following

ADDRESS.

Fellow-citizens—In all ages man has remembered with peculiar pleasure, those eras or events which have been productive of signal benefit to his species. Not unfrequently has that pleasure been manifested in public demonstrations, which though derived from a common source, and having a common object, have been as widely diversified in their modes as were the ages, the empires, and the countries which gave them birth. In our day, these demonstrations, whether made under the conventional regulations of positive law, the not less powerful force of long established custom, or the spontaneous promptings of public feeling, have usually assumed the form of anniversary ceremonies or celebrations. Thus we annually hail, in this country, the return of the day which gave birth to our national existence: in the city of New-York, the day of its final evacuation by the British forces is still suitably remembered; and in New-England, the anniversary of the landing of their pilgrim sires on the rock of Plymouth, is remembered with veneration, and celebrated with ardor.

On this occasion we are assembled to celebrate the birth-day of a man who stands pre-eminent above most, perhaps above all others, for the benign and salutary influence which his labors have conferred, and, as we trust, are long destined to confer on his fellow-men—the birth-day of the much abused, but ever to be venerated THOMAS PAINE.

We throw the gauntlet of controversy to no man; neither would we quarrel with any man's opinions. But in return for these concessions we claim the same indulgence which we are so willing to grant. We are aware that with many; perhaps with most even in this free, and comparatively enlightened country, the step which we are taking is sufficiently unpopular. We are aware that unwearied pains have been taken to identify the very name of PAINE with all that is loathsome and repulsive; and some of us are old enough to remember the day, when the sage of Monticello met with muttered curses, or open revilings from one end of the Union to the other, because he ventured to tender to this abused and neglected patriot a passage to our shores in a national ship. Such men may be very sincere Christians; but it is certain they manifest in their conduct, but very little of their much boasted christian charity and forbearance. To all such, and to such, if any there are in this assembly or in this vicinity, who view our proceedings with an unfavorable or an unfriendly eye, we would reply, in the language of their own scripture, "Judge not, lest ye be judged." We would also beg them to remember that but a few short centuries have elapsed, since to have celebrated the birth day of Jesus Christ, would have subjected its participation to as much opprobrium, and incomparably more danger, than now attends the birth-day of THOMAS PAINE.

It is not our intention to pronounce on this occasion Mr. Paine's eulogy. It is uncalled for; his memory needs it not; this age could scarcely appreciate it; but future ages will find it in the imperishable labors of his mighty mind. And when the result of those labors shall have unshackled, as they most assuredly will, the fetters which ignorance, priestcraft, and superstition have for ages, been rivetting on the human understanding, and man shall be mentally and morally free, then

will the memory of PAINE find its fit eulogium in the enthusiastic admiration of millions of his fellow mortals who are yet unborn. Yet though neither his eulogy, nor even a history of his life and useful labors is essayed, or will be attempted, the occasion seems, at least, to justify, if not demand, a brief recurrence to those prominent traits in his mental character, and a few of those leading events in his history which seem to mark him out most strongly as the benefactor of his species, and his memory as worthy of their unqualified respect and admiration.

The invention of the art of printing rendered the diffusion of knowledge and the interchange of ideas more easy, and, of course, more beneficial. From this era, we may date, among civilized man, some attention to his absolute and relative rights, and the germs of some correct ideas about them. The fire of liberty began to enkindle, and showed both in Holland and England some brilliant sparks; but, never until the American revolution did it appear to light up a pure, a salutary, and an enduring flame. Less than three millions of human beings in the neglected and unknown wilds of America, set the world the first example of a practical illustration and enforcement of the rights of man. It was at this fearful, but glorious period, that the genius of PAINE, burst at once, and in the full maturity of its splendor, upon the world as the advocate and champion of those rights; and much indeed at that peculiar juncture was such a champion needed. The American people, comparatively unaccustomed to restraints, and comparatively also an intelligent and reflective people, were, nevertheless, in the mass, very far from having any just or even any definite ideas of their rights, and of the nice line between wholesome restraints and injurious subjection. They had been taught that they were free, but they knew not what freedom was, save in the name. They felt that they were injured and oppressed by the tyrannical acts of the mother country, and with characteristic native spirit they resolved at once and unqualifiedly to resist; though it may well admit of a serious doubt, if the majority of them knew either the why or the wherefore, much less what, if successful, would be the proper remedy and future safeguard against the evils they were conscious of having suffered.

It was at this crisis, big with the fate and the happiness of unborn millions, that PAINE stepped forward to cheer, to unite, and to enlighten his countrymen; to give them a common aim and a common object; to lead them to definite ideas, fixed principles, and sound practical doctrines relative to the civil and political rights of man, and to hallow the cause of resistance to oppression, even when that oppression came from a regular government, by drawing strongly, plainly, and understandingly, the line between the rights and the duties of the governing and the governed, and demonstrating that when the compact was wilfully infringed by the former, it remained no longer binding on the latter. To say that there was much of originality in his views would be but giving their faintest praise. Their great excellence consisted in their conciseness, their clearness, and their common sense; in so managing his subject as to render it not only comprehensible but familiar to the meanest capacity. What was in this way the extent of the services of Mr. Paine to his countryman and to the human race, remains not to be

told. It is already matter of history, which has long since briefly, but beautifully, expressed the value of those services in the acknowledgment that "Americans owe their liberties scarcely less to the pen of PAINE than to the sword of Washington."

We might here safely pause, and appeal to the candor, and to the gratitude of our countrymen, to say whether those services rendered by THOMAS PAINE to Americans and to mankind, to which we have already alluded, do not richly deserve that his memory should be held in veneration by every friend of the rights of man. But truth and candor require of us the declaration that we have other and higher motives for the tribute which we are now assembled to pay; for great as were the benefits already enumerated, which the genius of PAINE conferred on mankind, before the close of his career it conferred on them other, and if possible, yet greater benefits. After achieving so splendid a victory over temporal tyranny, it was reserved to PAINE to achieve another equally splendid and more desirable over spiritual tyranny—over the deadly and blighting influence of superstition and priestcraft—over the strong hold where the enemies of mankind had in all ages entrenched themselves to delude, to mislead, and to enslave them.

Under the mask of a pretended revelation, as God's vicegerents on earth, and as the sole and expressly appointed interpreters of his will and pleasure, of what enormities, what follies, of what absurdities, and oppressions, have not priests and rulers been guilty! They have perpetrated crimes which might well raise a blush on the sable cheek of the eternal father of all evil at being so far outdone by his short lived children! Human laws might be disobeyed, and human authority resisted; the veriest monster that ever lived throned in all the terrors of mere human power, might be contended against without impiety, and might at least be estimated as he deserved. But when a supposed divine sanction was added to his rescripts, his acts, and his opinions; and when, in addition to his power over the body, he wielded a supposed power over the soul, and, weal or wo, through the endless ages of eternity, became the admitted consequences of submission, or of opposition to his will, to resist became not only impiety but madness. Men were afraid to think and to reason for themselves. They were taught to believe it impious. It was the business of their self-styled spiritual guides to think and to reason for them: their business was only to believe and submit.

It requires no labored essay to shew the benumbing and deleterious effects which this state of things must have on the human mind. All history is full of the melancholy consequences. Four-fifths of the habitable globe is even yet an existing momento of their blasting influence. Look at Spain, at Portugal, at Italy, at Turkey, and at the immense and fertile regions of Asia. Where, in these widely extended regions does the human mind present one green spot to relieve the anxiety, or to cheer the hopes of the philanthropist? And why is it so? Is not the human mind as capable of great, of noble, of beneficial exertions there as here? Undoubtedly. Then why are they not made? Because the rust of the iron fetters of superstition has eaten to the very heart core of the human intellect—benumbing all its faculties, and paralyzing all its energies.

It was against this oldest and deadliest scourge of his race that PAINE, after the American Revolution, opened the tremendous batteries of reason, of fact, and of common sense. And that he did not utterly demolish it at once was not the fault of either his aim or his exertions, but owing to the force of long cherished habit and of deep rooted prejudice. The monster, however, is already tottering to his fall; and we may fondly hope that in a few brief ages more his loathsome carcass will no longer infest the earth. The acute mind of PAINE foresaw that it was not sufficient to make man politically free, but that it was indispensable to his happiness that he should become likewise mentally and morally so. To effect this object he did not content himself with any palliatives; with any half way measures. He took, in the homely but expressive phrase, "the bull by the horns," and boldly and broadly denied the existence, or the reality of any revelation from God to man, save such as is made through his works of creation and providence; and he maintained the impregnable position, that all human creeds not based on, and sanctioned by free and enlightened human reason, are absurd and dangerous. Disdaining to fight at a distance when he could grapple with his adversaries in close contest, he took his stand at once on the bible; that boasted pretended record of the revelation of God's will; and from its own internal evidences, he shewed it to be a mass of fiction, of disgusting obscenity, of shocking depravity, of palpable contradictions, and of gross absurdity.

The attack was in its effects as fatal, as it was in its nature irresistible. The poor bible, and the priests who fared sumptuously, and ruled despotically under the mask of its assumed divinity of origin, have never been able, and never will be able to recover from the shock. They have struggled, indeed, and are still struggling with all the energies of men in their last agonies; but in vain. The decree has gone forth, and it is irrevocable. The scales have dropped from the eyes of human reason; the fetters which bound it have been driven asunder, and it stands—to borrow, and somewhat to alter, the language of a celebrated orator on a kindred subject—"redeemed, regenerated, and disenthralled by the gigantic genius of the immortal PAINE!"

Such is a hasty, and a very imperfect sketch of some of the services rendered to his race by the departed THOMAS PAINE. And if to aid materially, not merely in giving freedom to a world, but in teaching man to feel, to understand, and to assert his equal political rights should claim his gratitude; nay more—if to have reinstalled and secured reason herself on that throne whence, for so many ages, she had been deposed, and trampled on by the most degrading superstition—if these be services to entitle the memory of any human being to be held in peculiar unceasing remembrance, and veneration by his species, surely that of THOMAS PAINE cannot soon be either forgotten or neglected.

The address being concluded, the following toasts were given from the chair:

1. Thomas Paine. Honor and respect to the memory of the man who so successfully and steadily braved the fury of civil and ecclesiastical tyranny.

2. The memory of the pioneers of mental freedom, Voltaire, Bolingbroke, Hume, Boulanger, Holbach, Volney, Byron, and all those philo-

sophers who by their writings contributed to subvert superstition, and vindicate the rights of humanity.

3. Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, Elihu Palmer.

4. Robert Owen, Frances Wright, George Houston, and Richard Carlile, who have faced the whole artillery of the superstitionists of Europe and America—may they continue the bold and undaunted champions of liberal principles.

5. Our cause—may no private bias or selfish interest prevent any man from serving it.

6. May the time soon arrive when the benevolent and patriotic labors of Thomas Paine will be appreciated by as many as have heretofore despised them.

7. The Free Press Association of New-York—may it succeed in endowing the followers of the illegitimate Jew with reason and good sense.

8. Truth, reason, and the liberty of the press, the dispellers of the ignorance of past ages.

9. To take advantage of the ignorance of the people, and by their credulity make them subservient to their purposes, has ever been the practice of wicked and designing men.

When human minds were mean and bare,
And no philosopher was there,
Bold trinity took the chair—

He still doth sit;
And oft, by heaven, I've heard him swear
He'll never quit.

By Thomas W. Goss. Alexander the coppersmith—may the priests never receive worse treatment than Paul did from him.

By Thomas Emerson. George Houston, may his life be as long as his writings have been useful. (Three times three.)

By Charles Robinson. A priest to turn the grindstone, and a liberal to hold on.

By Andrew Kirwan. Voltaire—his pungent wit has procured him from the illiberal, the title of scoffer—let us give him another—the prince of philosophers.

By James Goss. It's strange that Thomas must be Tom,
For not believing three is one.

By James McElroy. The 31st chapter of Numbers, the 4th, 16th, and 23d chapters of Ezekiel; proof positive of the *chastity* of the old testament.

Ode. "Wake up ye Sons of Light and Joy." *By T. Emerson.*

By F. B. Dickson. The writings of Thomas Paine—the Upas to kings and priests—the balm of Gilead to the human race.

By Wm. Groves. The memory of George Bethune English—he demonstrated that no man officially clothed in black could be honest.

By the same. Church and state. May the former be removed by death, ere the couple marry.

By D. J. Morris. The libellers of Thomas Paine—may they recollect the fate of Hamon.

By R. Place. Liberal principles, the death of superstition.

By Thomas Emerson. Benjamin Offen, the fearless advocate of liberal principles.

By Andrew Kirwan. Frances Wright, the fair philosopher—her opponents dare not enter the list against her, being convinced that, in the field of argument, to be *right* is to be invincible.

By M. P. Paft. May the dark clouds of superstition, which darken the mental horizon, be dispelled by the rising sun of reason and philosophy.

Ode. "No Glory I covet." By T. Emerson.

By N. Caulking. Church and state—should they marry, before the bride conceives, may bigotry and superstition be their funeral pile, and the torch of liberal principles set fire to the heap.

New Hartford---bullet proof against the late *Finney* excitement.

The meeting adjourned about 10 o'clock highly gratified with the entertainment, and with the sentiments of respect offered to the memory of him in whose honor we met. The following gentlemen were appointed a committee to make arrangements for celebrating the next anniversary : viz. James Goss, of Oriskany ; James Groves, New-Hartford ; Richard Sanger, jr. Vernon ; Thomas Emerson, Augusta ; Charles Robinson, Sauquoit ; Andrew Kirwan, Deerfield ; and D. J. Morris, Utica, corresponding secretary.

Yours respectfully,

D. J. MORRIS.

MISCELLANEOUS.

MASSACRE OF ST. BARTHOLOMEW.

The originator of this murderous conspiracy was, lamentable to state, a female ; Catharine de Medicis, queen mother of Charles IX. of France, supported and assisted by her royal son, the popish nobility, magistrates, military officers, and priests of France.

Various preliminary measures were taken to blind that party whom, for the fartherance of the Roman catholic faith, it was resolved to destroy ; and so successful were the efforts, that Admiral de Coligny, the chief of the protestants, or huguonots, when remonstrated with on his apparent security, desired that his mind, which was occupied with more weighty matters, might not be disturbed, but that they would join with him in prayer to God, to prosper their undertakings for the good of the state.

It should here be observed, that Charles was in the habit of addressing this amiable veteran, whom he now dismissed to his assassins, by the endearing and richly deserved appellation of father. Coligny, on his way home, was charitably occupied in reading a petition from some distressed object : as he passed the house of Villemur, a piece was discharged from a window, the curtain of which was drawn, and the innocent victim was struck by two balls. His mind and countenance retained the most perfect composure. He noted the house whence the balls were fired, and dispatched some of his retinue to inform the king of this violation of public faith. In answer to the suggestion of some of his friends that the balls might be poisoned, he said, "God's will be done !"

With some little support he was enabled to walk to his residence, where the king's surgeon, Ambrose Pare, examined his wounds : the patient being put to excruciating torture, pathetically exclaimed, "Is this,

then, the fruit of my notable reconciliation with the Guises, for which the king himself was so lately guarantee?" turning to the late queen's chaplain he said, "Brother, I now perceive that I am beloved of God, since I suffer these wounds for his most holy name!"

The chaplain of the prince of Conde entered while the Admiral's arm was being dressed, and, comforting him with some scriptural quotations, the Admiral ejaculated, "My God, leave me not in this time of misery! cease not thy accustomed mercies, oh! my God!" He also ordered a noble alms to be given to the poor of some church in Paris, which if, as some have supposed, they were Papists, was indeed an exemplary act.

Many distinguished officers now arrived to condole with the Admiral, and some of them complimented him on not being deficient himself in that courage with which he had often so effectually inspired others. His answer was made cheerfully, "I assure you, upon my honour, gentlemen, that death does not appear to me to have any terrors. I am ready and willing, whenever my God commands, to resign the breath which I originally derived from him; but I wish to see his majesty before I die, and to press on his heart some things in which his crown and dignity are greatly concerned; and I know none of you who dare inform him of them."

Among these visitors were some who had strongly pressed the Admiral to go to Paris, but he did not suffer the slightest reproach, as to the result of their unfortunate advice, to escape him. On the afternoon of the day of this attempt, the king, in consequence of a message, conveyed by a respectful deputation, waited on the Admiral, who most solemnly and affectingly appealed to God, at whose awful judgment seat he soon expected to appear, that, although frequently misrepresented and misunderstood, he had always been a most faithful subject. The king, struck with the solemnity of the attestation, answered, "I believe you." The Admiral then gave him much excellent advice on the two important points near his heart—war with Spain, and peace with the Huguonots.

Charles sent a messenger to propose Coligny's removal, for greater safety, to apartments in the Louvre, and, afterwards, frequently repeated it in person, by way of proving his regard for the welfare of his victim; whose loyalty was such, that he would readily have thrown himself into the power of his butcher, had not some honest men interfered to prevent it. These were the medical attendants; particularly Mazeil, Charles's chief physician. They unanimously declared, that the motion, incidental to a change of residence, would be attended with danger. Though they would not sacrifice their judgment and conscience, divines were not wanting at the Louvre, to endeavour to reconcile them to the court measures, on the Jesuitical maxim, that "ends sanctify means."

Charles's visit being concluded, the leaders of the Huguonots assembled in the Admiral's apartments, and some of them proposed vigorous measures for his defence. To these he answered, "My compliance with your advice would betray fear or distrust: the first would be injurious to my own honor, the latter, to that of the king: your suggestion would rekindle the flames of civil war; but I would rather die than repent former scenes and sufferings." The authority and energy with which he delivered this sentiment, combined with the declaration of the physicians,

silenced all opposition for this time ; it however appears, that the proposal was again taken into consideration when his recovery seemed no longer doubtful, and that his stay in Paris was principally influenced by the opinion of M. Telligny, his son-in-law.

The probability of the Admirals's recovery no sooner appeared evident, than the ministers of Charles and Catharine had various consultations how to detain their victim in France, having already failed in exciting the Montmorencis to an open revenge upon the Guises, who, it was little doubted, were the perpetrators of this first attempt.

The result of these deliberations did not transpire : but the imprudence of the protestant council in requesting a guard for the Admiral's person, rendered all other measures for the fartherance of the plot unnecessary. The question "who then shall watch the guard?" could never be more appropriately asked. Who besides the most inveterate and blood-thirsty enemies could it be supposed, under such circumstances, would be appointed to this service?

Catherine, Charles and Anjou smiled on receiving the Huguonots' petition, which was most graciously acceded to on the moment, and Cosseints, with a body of men devoted to the conspirators, was selected for the purpose : a few of the king of Navarre's Switzers were added, to allay suspicion ; but their number was too inconsiderable, to impede the glorious Romish work of protestant destruction. The noble Huguonots, who attended the Admiral's person, were billeted in his vicinity, whither catholics were prohibited to resort on pain of death ; and the protestants were, by compulsion or contrivance, induced to repair to that quarter ; being, in point of fact, destined for slaughter, and a list of their names taken accordingly. To render the bloody work still more certain on the present occasion, the king of Navarre and prince of Conde were considerably advised by the court, to keep the protestant nobility and gentry close within the walls of the Louvre ; as that would be the safest place from all danger and tumult of the Guise faction.

Charles now began to shudder at the horrors of the abyss into which he was about to plunge. The last cabinet council, which assembled for this bellish object, consisted of Charles, Catharine, the duke of Anjou, count of Angouleme, (Charles's natural brother) Ranate, Birague, the count de Retz, and marshal Tavannes. In this meeting the chancellor thus delivered his sentiments. "The pernicious flame of heresy which has spread through the whole realm, and been nourished by de Coligny, we now see cannot be extinguished by his blood alone—but by the blood of his whole sect. God has demonstrated, by his permission of the Admiral's recovery, which the physicians affirm to be certain, that his wrath cannot be appeased by the sacrifice of one life : but that it requires whole multitudes. The king, in council did, indeed, at first, wish and even hope to spill no blood but that of de Coligny. We are now necessitated to substitute justice for mercy : by no less efficacious means can the storm, impending over both king and kingdom, be dispelled : for, if de Coligny, having received no injury, was most dangerous to his country, what must he be when, like an insulted lion, he shall break from his fetters?"

"The populace must have reins given to their zeal; and the will of God, who plainly disapproves of moderation, must be no longer disobeyed. Justification will not be wanting when the deed is once done, and the Guises, however invidious the bloody burthen may seem, will cheerfully take it upon themselves."

A speech so fraught with deliberate horror and blasphemy, perhaps never, either before or since, coolly passed the lips of man. Are these the religious tenets which are "unchanged and unchangeable?"

Some one, whose name has not been ascertained, endeavoured to influence Charles to compassion; and so effectually succeeded, that he broke up the council in that disposition. The rage, however, which Catharine experienced from this change, was not to be quietly submitted to by a woman of her violent temper; and by making use of the engines of fear and pride, she soon convinced her son that he had gone too far to recede. "You faint and tremble," said she, "when God presents this blessed opportunity of destroying, by one auspicious stroke, his enemies and your own! Is it not far better to tear in pieces these corrupt members of the state, than to suffer the pure breast of Christ's spouse, the church, to rankle?"

This language, from his mother, soon decided the vacillating Charles, who only reassembled his council thus to address them. "Whoever farther opposes my will on the subject of vengeance against the enemies of his God and his king, is a double traitor! Since we must destroy these heretical rebels, let us dispatch every one of them, that not an individual may survive to reproach us!" Two, however, were exempted, after great deliberation, from the universal massacre: the king of Navarre and prince of Conde.

To be continued.

Free Press Association.—The meetings of the Association are now held in the Bowery Long Room, opposite the Theatre; where a lecture (in continuation) *on the doctrine of election*, will be delivered to-morrow (Sunday) afternoon, at 3 o'clock.

In the evening, at half-past 6 o'clock, a debate will take place on the following question:—*Have the doctrines and precepts of the new testament a tendency to improve, or demoralize society?*

Tickets of admission, (to be had at the door) three cents each. Ladies free.

* * * We would remind our subscribers who have not paid for the present year, that their last years' subscription expired on the 24th January, and that if they wish their names to be continued on our list, it is necessary they should settle immediately.

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